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CULTURAL eMAGAZINE

INK OCHi

FIRST OF ITS KIND FROM KERALA

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- Book Review

CULTURAL eMAGAZINE
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EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Varghese T. Thomas
varghese.ink@gmail.com

EDITORIAL DESK
Annie Smitha
anniesmitha.ink@gmail.com

Alicen Jacob
alicen.ink@gmail.com

DESIGN & LAYOUT
Hari N Nair
Viswanath Gopal

MARKETING & ADVERTISEMENT
Suresh Panickar

For editorial, advertisements and feedback:

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Phone/WhatsApp : 8547 107 471
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Editor's Note

Women Empowerment

"You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women"
– Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

Why we talk about women empowerment only and not men empowerment? Why women need empowerment and not men? Women make almost 50% of the total population of the world. Then why this substantial section of the society needs empowerment? They are not in minority so as to require special treatment. Biologically speaking also, it is a proven fact that female race is superior to male. Then the question arises that why we are debating the topic 'Women Empowerment'.

Need for empowerment arose due to centuries of domination and discrimination done by men over women; women are the suppressed lot. They are the target of varied types of violence and discriminatory practices done by men all over the world. India is no different.

India is a complex country. We have, through centuries, developed various types of customs, traditions and practices. These customs and traditions, good as well as bad, have become a part of our society's collective consciousness. We worship female goddesses; we also give great importance to our mothers, daughters, sisters, wives and other female relatives or friends. But at the same time, Indians are also famous for treating their women badly both inside and outside their homes.

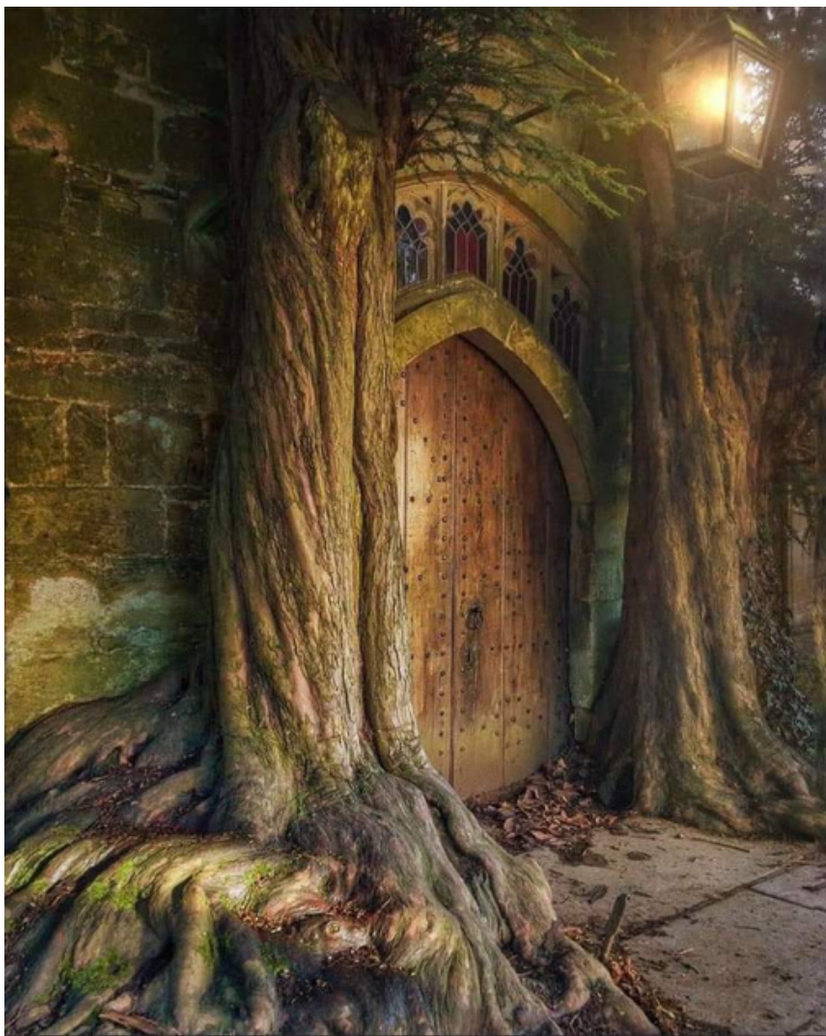
Thus, women empowerment is nothing but recognition of women's basic human rights and creating an environment where they are treated as equals to men.

Happy Reading...!!
Varghese T. Thomas

AMAZING TO KNOW

Contribution: Anatolian Leo

The grenade as we know it is a weapon that began to be used in the late 18th century. But since the Middle Ages there were already some primitive models. And one of these primitive grenades was found by Israeli archaeological authorities. Analysis reveals that it was probably used during the Crusades. Like the existing ones, this gun was hand fired. It worked thanks to a burning fuse, when it detonated the bomb and spread its contents, which consumed flammable liquid. According to the authors of the discovery, these primitive grenades were often used against enemy ships to burn their sails and make them sink into flames.



13th century door from St. Edward's Chirch, Stow-on-the-Wold, Cotswolds, England.

One of archeology's greatest discoveries: the Oseberg Viking Ship dated to 834 AD, Tønsberg, Norway. (advertised image)

AMAZING TO KNOW

Contribution: Anatolian Leo

The Arch of Ctesiphon near Baghdad. The worlds largest single span unreinforced brick arch, built in the 6th Century AD.

NAKHODA MASJID KOLKATA

Monumentally designed, surmounted by lofty domes and minarets, lavishly ornamented and brightly painted, the Nakhoda Masjid is impossible to miss as it rises above the chaos and commotion of the old business district of Burra Bazaar in Calcutta.

From whichever direction it is observed, it manages to draw the audience in with the compelling dynamism of its formal structure, likely born of the need to negotiate between a compact corner site abutting busy streets, and the direction of the qibla that does not quite align with the diagonal drawn through the site. >>

AMAZING TO KNOW

NAKHODA MASJID KOLKATA

The structure is also an intriguing adaptation of the standard Islamic courtyard-and-iwan layout realized amidst the real estate pressures of a modern city, resulting in the shrinkage and fragmentation of the sahn, the displacement of the hauz off centre, the stacking of multiple storeys atop hypostyle halls, and overall a complete re-invention of the traditional systems of scale and proportion expected of a turn of the century mosque.

But more than the formal inquiry it generates, it is perhaps the narrative informing the nomenclature of the mosque - Nakhoda (Persian: master of the ship) that emerges as the most fascinating aspect of the mosque, as it sums up several layers of spirituality, mobility, and diaspora of a community! <>

Thought by ILF Expert Parshati Dutta

Here is the continuation of the Tree Cult in the Serbia-Thunder region.
Small Chapel in a large oak tree, dedicated to a Christian saint...

Mankind; He takes care of everything he believes in for centuries, without leaving it, transforming it and preserving its sanctity.

AMAZING TO KNOW

Contribution: Anatolian Leo

A Victorian-era candle-lit Christmas tree.

1800s

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Christmas in Finland: Meet the Malayalee voice in traditional Finnish choir

By: Staff Reporter (ukmalayalee.com)

TAMPERE (Finland) Dec 12: When Christmas's around, it's a scene straight out of one of those fairy tales in Finland. The landscape sleeps under a foot depth of snow, and the temperatures plunge to a bone chilling -20 degrees. But there is warmth to be found everywhere: in the light decorations of streets and houses, in the aroma of delicious gingerbread and 'Glogi' wafting from chimneys, and the traditional Christmas carols playing from the churches. We can be proud that one of those voices is from a Malayalee girl.

Though rated in the top five difficult languages in the world to learn, Finnish language is no alien to Arya Balu S, who lives in the city of Tampere, Finland. She works as an R&D Engineer in Nokia Networks in the city and she is part of the Sampolan Laulajat ry (Sampola singers group), which is the female choir of the city's Regional Workers' College.

The choir was founded in as early as 1908. Sampola Singers is a female choir of about 25 singers, of which Arya is the only non-Finn at present. They practice music composed and arranged for the female choir once a week. The choir performs in churches and gives concerts. They also perform on other occasions on request.

Malayalee voice in traditional Finnish choir

Hailing from a tradition of singing

Arya's family has had several singers over generations and she carries forward the legacy. She is learning classical Carnatic music since childhood. She took a long break due to the her father's sudden demise and the necessity to find a profession.

Malayalee voice in traditional Finnish choir

After getting into a job, she started her passion again. For a brief period, she took vocal opening classes from Sunil Koshy who is the founder of Mug2Mike. In Finland she is continuing classes under the classical music maestro Shankaran Namboothiri, through online teaching.

At Sampola, the choir director liked her voice during the singing test and she was always fascinated by choir singing. “It was a perfect match for both of us”, says Arya. “Knowing Malayalam was an edge to pronouncing Finnish”, she says. “The letters ‘R’ and ‘L’ are pronounced the same as in Malayalam” – so we didn’t have to unlearn the ‘rounded and flattened’ R of the English pronunciation.

The Finnish language

Finnish does not belong to the European family of languages hence there is little correlation between English and Finnish languages. Immigrants usually take up to three years to be comfortable reading and speaking the language. The wide disparity between written form and the spoken form of Finnish is another difficulty for the learners.

Malayalee voice in traditional Finnish choir

Long words are common, as Finns tend to combine multiple words into single one. So ‘Jauhelihakeitto’(minced meat soup) and ‘Käsipyyherullajärjestelmä’(hand towel rolling system) are not very uncommon! Exposure and practice are the keys to mastering the language. The positive part is that the script is the same as English, and we don’t have to spend time learning them.

Singing amidst the Finns

Arya hasn’t taken any formal training in Finnish language, but the fellow singers helped her a lot. The choir director would provide her with printed lyrics and would send her recordings of the carols. She would use google translate to understand their meanings. Since the words rhymed well, it wasn’t that difficult for her to remember the lyrics.

Malayalee voice in traditional Finnish choir

They would often praise her for her skill with the lyrics and appreciate her natural pronunciation. There were difficult times like when the teacher would just announce the song title and everyone would start singing, and she alone would have to pour through all the pages of Finnish looking for the right lyrics. But with patience and practice, she overcame those times. Though the group comes from different age groups and areas of work, they just gather once a week, keeping aside all other work, and spend a good 3 hours singing and relaxing.

At this moment she is elated to have sung in her first ever church choir. One can find ample arenas to follow one's passion even if one lives in the farthest of countries from home.

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THE OLIVE WIFE

Tessy John

By: Annie Smitha

The Army Wife- Be it Tangdar or Joshimath, the Olive wife-Tessy John an engineer turned teacher turned organiser turned artist turned what not has made it her fortress only to stand tall and shoulder to shoulder with her beloved man.

It takes a lot of grit to be an army man and even more to be married to one. The invisible strength of a soldier at the war front is his belief that everyone and everything he cares for is in the capable, caring and safe hands of his wife. Having said that most of us have a notion about olive wives existing as shadows of their better halves and nothing more. A peep into the life of Mrs.Tessy John, wife of Lieutenant Colonel Siby Joseph, Core of Engineers, Indian Army tells us an inspirational story of transforming sacrifices and hardships into opportunities to grow and empower.

THE OLIVE WIFE

Tessy is a native of Thycattussery in the district of Alappuzha, Kerala. She took a Diploma in Polymer Technology from GPT, Kottayam and graduated in Plastic Engineering from CIPMET-Bhopal at a time ripe for engineers in the Plastic Industry. She worked in Polymer based industries like Parenteral Drugs India Limited, Johnson Cycle Tyres and could have had a successful career as an engineer.

However, she chose to accompany her husband who was Captain in the Army then. She got married in 2001 immediately after Kargil war. As a young bride, travelling from Srinagar to Kupuara along with army convoy, the vehicle that succeeded theirs was attacked by militants.

THE OLIVE WIFE

Five people were injured and there was a pool of blood on the road enough to instil fear and panic to any young woman who had never witnessed anything of the sort before. She used to spend those days thinking how many commandos will return back to the army camp alive. Each day strengthened her mentally as suited to a Fauji wife settling in the temporary station they had to make their home.

The AWWA-Army Wives Welfare Association provided Tessy the right platform to find her bearings. She then became a major part of the activities conducted by the organisation. AWWA is one of the largest NGO's in India and fundamentally stands for the welfare of the spouses, children and dependents of Army personnel. Tessy was the secretary of their unit in Joshimath IBEX Brigade and Garhi Cantonment Dehradun.

THE OLIVE WIFE

She was engaged in empowering the wives of the Jawans in her unit under AWWA. She has organised seminars on health issues and other important matters. AWWA helps in the vocational training of these women. A soldier is at his best when he is not worried about his family and that is the primary idea behind the organisation AWWA. It is not a compulsory duty for the wives of army officers to engage in the activities of AWWA but Women like Tessy John takes it upon themselves to engage in such activities to develop themselves and to help others grow.

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Vocal: GAYATHRY RAJIV (Mazhavil Manorama Super 4 Contestant)
BGM: AJAYAN K. S. | Studio: GEETHAM MEDIA STUDIO, KOCHI
Recorded, Mix & Mastered: JINTO JOHN
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THE OLIVE WIFE

Hand works on bed sheets, linens, runners, mats, cushion covers, upholstery and decorative works, handbags, bottle holders, paintings, embroidery, knitted works, dress materials are some of the products that they make. Stalls are arranged from time to time to sell these products. It also find its way to big shopping malls as well owing to the superior quality and high demand. There are Army Schools and Asha Schools (Special Schools) all over India.

THE OLIVE WIFE

Tessy worked as teacher in army schools wherever she could including the prestigious Delhi Army Primary School. She has hosted and organised multiple theme based programs for the Army Personnel. She was also actively involved in projecting issues that had social implications like Bishop Franco's case which led to his arrest.

The frequent transfers of army personnel is one of the biggest problems that his family has to deal with. Packing and unpacking is a tedious business which is enough to restrict most people from taking too much pains to decorate their temporary apartments but Tessy made each of her Temporary accommodations perfect homes. She is a great garden enthusiast who created a small Eden wherever she lived. Her tastes also lies in Food presentations.

THE OLIVE WIFE

The art of arranging and decorating food to enhance its aesthetic appeal is something worth mentioning. She is also a fine cook who is ready to share her secret recipes with others. One of her recipes featured in a previous issue of INKochi.

The latest of her passions that she discovered few years ago which kept her engaged and added a new vigour to her life during the pandemic is painting. The paintings including Murals are enthralling for someone with no prior experience at it in childhood or youth. Intrigued by the Amarchithrakatha pictures and stories since childhood,

THE OLIVE WIFE

Tessy found her imagination and fingers capturing the divine love between Radha and Krishna more often. She is selling her paintings and gets regular orders for her works especially from the Army personnel.

Now stationed at Jaipur, she is happily waiting for her winter saplings to bloom to perfect her garden. She has set a beautiful balcony to give her the ambience and positive vibes to spend her evenings with family and sometimes to be alone to do her paintings.

Tessy is one of numerous army wives who turns their disadvantages into opportunities to grow and help others find meaning in their lives. These women who sacrifices their career, the warm comfort of a permanent home and gives their men the strength and moral support to fight for their country are heroes in their own merit.

Writer - Annie Smitha

Independent Writer, Poet / Educator.
Teaches at Sobha Icon, Palakkad, Kerala.
(A CSR project of Sobha Ltd.)
Smitha is also with INKochi Magazine
in its editorial desk and writes cover stories.
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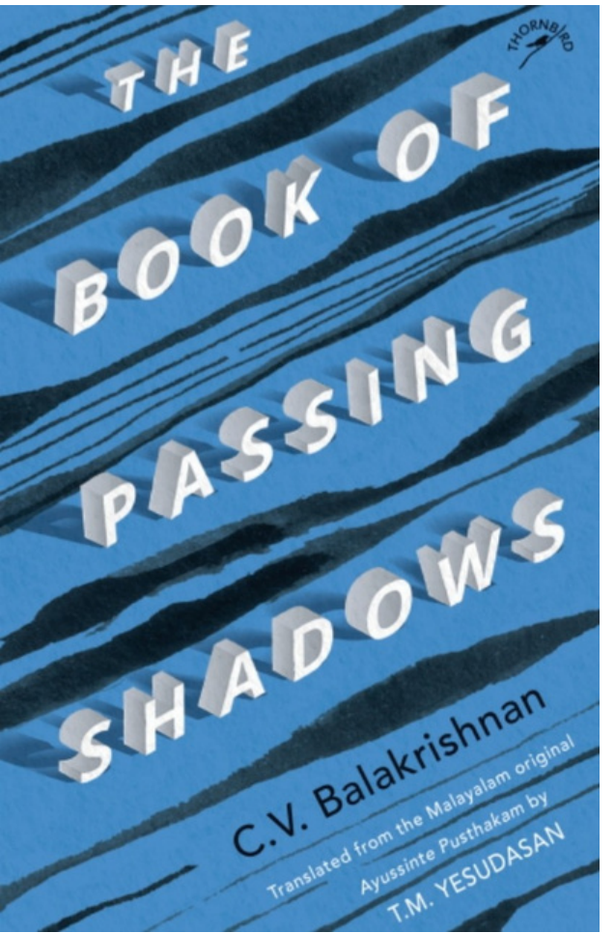
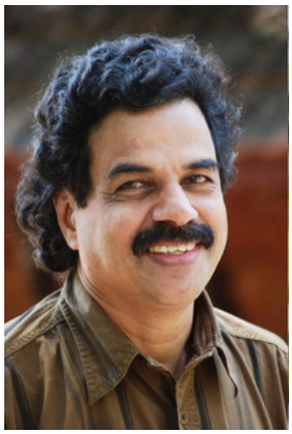


BOOK REVIEW

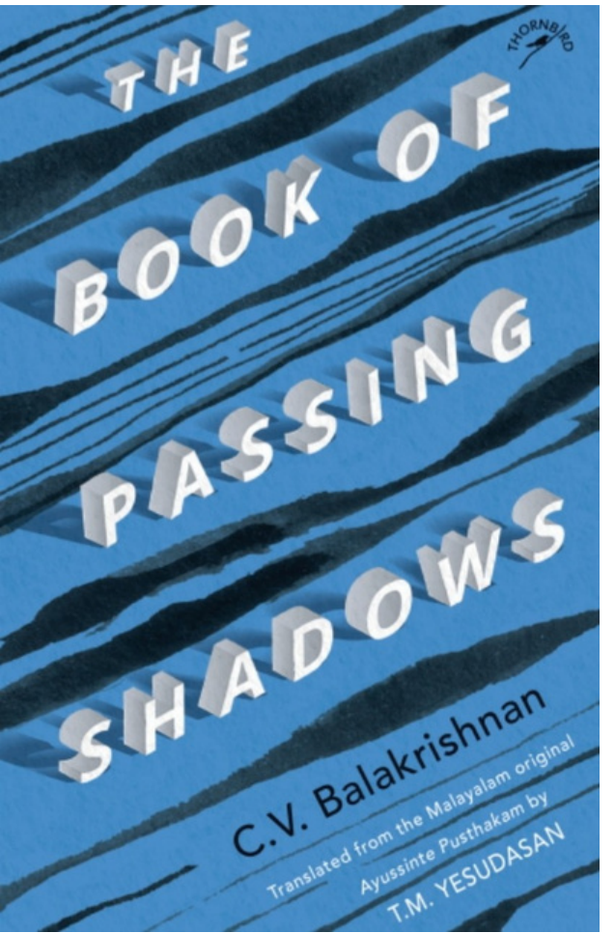


C.V. Balakrishnan
Author

Set in a Malabar village of Christian settlers, The Book of Passing Shadows, translated from the Malayalam original Aayusinte Pusthakam, tells the story of a family's fall from grace, and their journey to redemption.

As the narrative unravels against the wider inner conflict between bodily temptations and spiritual aspirations, the sins of one generation seem to visit ominously upon the next. Through his journey from an innocent childhood to a ruined adolescence, Yohannan loses everyone he knows as 'family'—a father who is a convicted felon, a grieving mother who passes away while her husband is in prison, an elder sister with prospects who elopes to build a better life, a grandfather who embraces death after committing a sin, and a best friend and lover who chooses religion over domestic life. >>

C.V. Balakrishnan is the author of more than thirty books: novels, short story collections, screenplays, and essays. He has received several awards including the Kerala Sahitya Akademi award for the best novel and the Kerala State Film award for the best book on film studies.



BOOK REVIEW

T.M. Yesudasan
Translator

The only solace he finds is in the loving companionship of a grieving widow, Sara, who has been equally wronged by fate and unbundles her woes with him.

Faith plays a pivotal role—provides a mythical, ethical, and moral scaffolding of this heart-rending novel, which resonates with the agony and pathos of the human spirit caught in the travails of earthly life.

Written in a sublime style made lyrical with a biblical cadence and rich in scriptural allusions, this passionate and visionary narrative has remained popular with readers since it was first published in 1984. <>

T.M. Yesudasan, is a former associate professor and head, Department of English, CMS College, Kottayam. He has contributed to journals and anthologies on literary and cultural studies including the Penguin collection, No Alphabet in Sight: New Dalit Writing from South India.

Waiting for Stardust

JOSE VARGHESE

Jose Varghese is an Indian author who has worked as an English teacher in colleges and universities in India and the Middle East. He is the author of ‘Silver Painted Gandhi and Other Poems’ and his short story manuscript ‘In/Sane’ was a finalist in the 2018 Beverly International Prize.

He was a finalist twice in the London Independent Story Prize (LISP), a runner up in the Salt Prize, and was commended in the Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Prize.

His works are published in Litro, Joao Roque Literary Journal, Haunted Waters, Tempered Runes, Cathexis Northwest, Beyond Words Literary Magazine, The Best Asian Short Story Anthology (2019 and 2021), The Best Asian Poetry Anthology (2021), Dreich, Live Encounters, Meridian – The APWT Drunken Boat Anthology, Unthology 5, Unveiled, Reflex Fiction, Faber QuickFic, and Flash Fiction Magazine.

What we call the sky must be
empty, or clear, in the distance
beyond our flawed vision.
At dusk, ether is the backdrop
for a closer canvas on which
colours splash as they wish.

Particles in motion,
a spray of droplets coloured
in gaseous substance
with generous spills of rays
poured by the drowsy sun,
clouds of all ages and forms
chasing each other in
speeds their densities define.

The evening star peeps at us
from its mystical musings
as the show comes to an end
for the day, the night ready
to reveal the stardust
we're made of
as the only truth given us.

Life begins, flows and ends
unmoved, unhurt, by any
of these crude perspectives.

--- Jose Varghese

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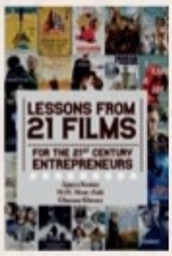

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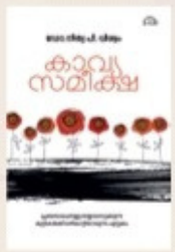

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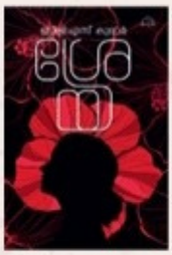

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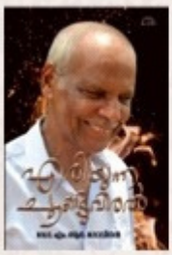

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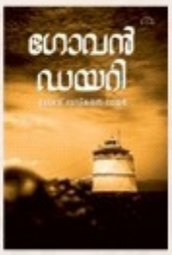

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Tawny Fish Owl

Clicked at Sattal, Uttarakand

December 2021

OneWeek OneShot

By:
Aarzoo Khurana

INKochi eMagazine | Dec 17-23, 2021
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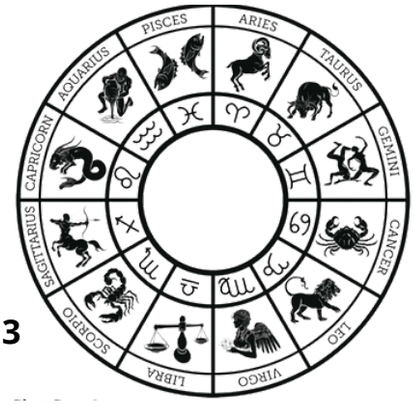
Portraying KERALA

WEEKLY Tarot Reading

By: Chaitali Mukherjee

https://youtube.com/c/TarotPriestess1313



Your Next 7 Days

Dec 17-23, 2021

Happy time, full of romantic love, a trip with loved ones. Work contracts with people from afar. Dreams will be realized. Artistic career. Notoriety. Great intuition makes finances secure.

ARIES

LIBRA

Your solution is near at hand. It's useless being obsessed due to an impossible project. Change your course immediately. A gratifying change, an intriguing trip on the cards. A serious proposal coming.

Before trusting others trust yourself. If you suffered sentimental sorrow, you will be compensated. You will reach your desired goals. Your job is satisfying and fills you with pride.

TAURUS

SCORPIO

Success will happen with a quick action. A move will be beneficial for your career. You are in a comfortable phase. Filled with physical and mental fertility. Deserved recognition. A friend is supportive.

Pleasant surprises. Don't be afraid of renewals. Love will win over logic and will be resolved. A friend offers precious advice. Useful friendships and satisfying ambitions.

GEMINI

SAGITTARIUS

Incomprehension and futile discussions. Close your ears to gossip. Keep going straight. Slight misunderstandings, depressive work situations are on the cards. With a bit of courage everything will go well.

Unpredictable health risks, arguments. Let go of things without regret - that are no longer serving your life. Accept a change even if you feel it's not right. A project is too ambitious, re-evaluate it.

CANCER

CAPRICORN

Enjoy your conquests, but it will be short lived, destiny has other plans. You can commit a rash act & your ideas could be whimsical at this time. Prepare for a long term upgrade.

There will be harmony at home. Good business and inheritance. Set aside fears and fantasies and face problems rationally. A shift to a bigger house is possible. Appointment and promotion on the cards.

LEO

AQUARIUS

Success in any field. Be grateful to God for fortune and use the opportunities presented. New duties, stimulating role brings out the best in you. An inheritance, extra income, a lucky chance gives you a favourable money situation.

Don't waste time on a decision that must be taken soon. A risky choice is impending. Confirmation of position. A surprise travel or trip. Life offers you a second chance. The person you love will make you happy.

VIRGO

PISCES

Surprise celebrations, family reunions, due to someone's departure or repatriation. A bright solution to a problem, divine support will be granted. Good finances and a career change that can show off your talents.

To know more about your reading, please watch her YouTube channel - Link in the Homepage

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